QUADPACK

Meet the Business Unit Director: David Zhou, Quadpack China

Continuing our series of interviews, we talk to David Zhou, the sourcing office manager of Quadpack China.

Question: Please describe Quadpack's sourcing operation in China.

David Zhou: We are a team of nine professionals, organised into three functional units: sourcing and purchasing (locally known as merchandising), quality assurance and logistics. We research the market to get to know the manufacturers and products available. Then we use this knowledge to source specific solutions for Quadpack clients worldwide. Our QA unit ensures our high quality standards are adhered to during development and our logistics support team ensures all shipments arrive on time.

Q: How do you select your manufacturing partners?

DZ: A manufacturer has to fulfil strict criteria before qualifying as a Quadpack manufacturing partner. We look for specialisation in a particular kind of pack. We investigate production capability, operating procedures and organisational set-up. When we are satisfied, they are required to submit to an independent audit by ProQC, our chosen certified auditor. In this way we have set up successful, often exclusive partnerships with leading manufacturers.

Q: What competition do you face in your local territory?

DZ: There are lots of other sourcing operations and trading offices in China. Quadpack stands out by specialising in skincare and by having a strong, established client base in Europe. Our tight focus, coupled with a good reputation and expert technical knowledge, means we operate in a different league to the average Chinese trading office.

Q: What is the most important factor in dealing with two very different cultures?

DZ: Good communication. We are like a translator. We translate detailed sales enquiries for our manufacturing partners and we translate technical quotations for the Quadpack sales offices. During project development, we ensure that everyone in the supply chain speaks the same language.

Q: What is it like to work at Quadpack China?

DZ: Interesting, challenging, satisfying. We are not a big team, but we are very efficient and we understand each other. Every day presents a new enquiry, a new challenge, and we are able to respond quickly and precisely. We are also a young team and we sometimes meet to go and see a movie; that helps us relax and grow closer.

Q: Do you have any plans for the future of Quadpack China?

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DZ: We are setting ourselves up to sell into China. Until recently, 90% of packaging was manufactured for export. This is changing. Since 2009, the domestic market has seen phenomenal growth, with a significant increase in local cosmetics brands. One new cosmetics brand alone has achieved $6 billion in sales in just two years. We are here, we have the infrastructure, the procedures, the expertise. Now we are preparing to secure our share of the local market.

Q: In your opinion, what's next in cosmetics packaging?

DZ: In one phrase: post-consumer recycling. Packs made of eco-friendly materials are increasingly popular. That means recyclable plastics like PP and PET, but also natural materials like bamboo, with is a big resource here and grows fast. Hands-free actuation is also on the rise, for hygienic application of eye creams and colour cosmetics.

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About Quadpack Industries SA

Quadpack Industries is an international manufacturer and a provider of enhanced packaging solutions for beauty brand owners and contract fillers. With offices and production facilities in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific region and a strategic network of manufacturing partners, Quadpack develops bespoke and customised packs for prestige, masstige and mass market customers. For more information, please visit www.quadpack.com.

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